recent visit to that country, various facets of cooperation between the two countries in economic, commercial and other arenas. It was felt that the private sectors in both the countries had an important role to play in promoting economic linkages between India and South Africa. In this context an India-South Africa CEO's Forum has already been established.

(c) There was broad agreement between the two sides regarding the policies to be followed so that Indo-South African economic ties get further strengthened. No new specific proposals in this regard were discussed.

(d) Does not apply.

Security Council seat without Veto-Powers

4536. DR. AKHILESH DAS:
SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any fresh proposals for expansion of the UN Security Council by induction of a few permanent and non-permanent members of the council, without Veto-Power; and

(b) if so, the details of the proposals and whether India agreed to accept permanent membership of the Security Council without Veto Powers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) The issue of the reform and restructuring of the UN Security Council has been under discussion at the United Nations for several years. In view of the complexities and the diverse perceptions on the specifics of such reforms among member States, a decision on this issue has not been reached as yet. The High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change' established by the UN Secretary General, in its report, released in December 2004, recognized the need for expansion of the UN Security Council, but, stopped short of making a definitive recommendation on new permanent members. Instead, it proposed two models 'A' and 'B' and recommended that "under any reform proposal, there should be no expansion of the Veto". Model 'A' provides for expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent

categories whereas Model 'B' envisages an additional non-permanent seat as well as creation of a new non-permanent category for a longer term tenure. It may be mentioned that the High Level Panel was Panel of independent experts and not an inter-Governmental body. The UN Secretary General in his report titled "In larger freedom: towards security, development and human rights for all" released on March 21, 2005 has urged Member States to consider the two options, models A and B, proposed in the report of the High Level Panel, or any other viable proposals in terms of size and balance that have emerged on the basis of either model. Discussions on this issue are underway in the UN. It is now for the UN members to take forward this process and to reach a decision. Regarding India's position on the issue of veto, Hon'ble Prime Minister has stated our position on the membership of the UN Security Council in the Parliament, which is that "there is no confusion regarding our position on our candidature for a Permanent Seat on the Security Council. At this point, all Permanent Members have veto powers. We are a candidate. This issue may arise in respect of any new Permanent Members who may be admitted. Our fundamental position remains clear. We do not believe there should be any discrimination in the Security Council and there should be no distinction between Permanent Members who have the veto and those who don't."

Passport Office at Visakhapatnam

4537. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the positive steps taken by the passport office at Visakhapatnam to improve the delivery of passports and good public reception;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Visakhapatnam model is not being replicated in other passport centres of the country;

(c) what steps are proposed to study the Visakhapatnam model of public interaction to improve all passport offices in the country; and

(d) steps proposed to improve the functioning of passport offices all over the country?